

JUDICIAL

Agency 056

Office of Public Defense

Recommendation Summary

Dollars in Thousands

	Annual FTEs	General Fund State	Other Funds	Total Funds
2003-05 Expenditure Authority	5.5	1,550	12,799	14,349
Total Maintenance Level	5.5	1,768	12,803	14,571
Difference		218	4	222
Percent Change from Current Biennium	0.0%	14.1%	0.0%	1.5%
Performance Changes				
Trial Level Indigent Defense	2.5		1,260	1,260
Equalization of Attorney Pay			322	322
Attorney Vendor Rate Increase			298	298
Dependency and Termination Program	4.0	13,595		13,595
Rate Change for Court Reporter			238	238
Public Safety and Education Account Elimination		14,921	(14,921)	
Subtotal	6.5	28,516	(12,803)	15,713
Total Proposed Budget	12.0	30,284		30,284
Difference	6.5	28,734	(12,799)	15,935
Percent Change from Current Biennium	118.2%	1,853.8%	(100.0)%	111.1%
Total Proposed Budget by Activity				
Public Defense	12.0	30,284		30,284
Total Proposed Budget	12.0	30,284		30,284

PERFORMANCE LEVEL CHANGE DESCRIPTIONS

Trial Level Indigent Defense

Indigent defendants have a fundamental, constitutional right to effective representation by an attorney. An increase to the Office of Public Defense's budget is needed to improve indigent defense representation in the trial courts.

Equalization of Attorney Pay

An increase to the Office of Public Defense budget is needed to equalize pay rates for all attorneys performing indigent appellate services.

Attorney Vendor Rate Increase

Attorneys fees for indigent appellate cases are lower than the private market fees and the amount paid by some counties for indigent defense trial work. A vendor rate increase will help offset cost of doing business increases for attorneys who perform these constitutionally required services.

Dependency and Termination Program

The Office of Public Defense seeks to implement statewide its evidence-based parents' representation program. This program will provide indigent parents with effective legal advocacy in dependency and termination cases, consistent with constitutional requirements.

Rate Change for Court Reporter

Court reporters prepare the verbatim reports of proceedings for indigent appellate cases and are compensated on a per page rate set by the Washington Supreme Court. The last rate increase for these services was granted on July 1, 1995. A per page rate increase from \$2.75 to \$3.00 is justified by the Implicit Price Deflator. This vendor rate increase will help offset cost of living increases for court reporters that perform these services.

Public Safety and Education Account Elimination

Concurrent with executive request legislation eliminating revenues to the Public Safety and Education Account (PSEA – Fund 02V), expenditures from the PSEA are transferred to the General Fund. All revenue sources previously deposited to the PSEA shall be deposited to the General Fund. (General Fund-State, Public Safety and Education Account-State)

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS**Public Defense**

The Office of Public Defense's duties are to implement the constitutional guarantee of counsel and to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of indigent appellate services.